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Soil Sampling for Agricultural Purposes: Business as Usual

By Attorney General Jon Bruning

Agriculture is the foundation upon which everything grows in Nebraska. For generations, Nebraska families have passed down the values of hard work and know-how that have kept our economy moving forward. Our agricultural history connects us to each other and to the land. With two generations born in a farmhouse in Bruning, I'm proud that my own family's roots reach deep into the rich soil of this great state.

Recently, there has been confusion regarding an informal opinion issued by my office concerning soil sampling. I hope to put to rest any uncertainty that our agricultural community may have.

To be clear – farmers, their employees and any third-parties they contract with to do routine soil sampling for agricultural purposes do not need to call the Diggers Hotline prior to taking a soil sample.

It is, and has always been, the opinion of this office that while the statutory language is unclear, farmers, or those acting on their behalf, are not required to notify the One-Call Board before performing routine soil sampling for agricultural purposes.

Nebraska farmers are known to be dedicated stewards of our land. I won't second-guess the common sense of those who work the land every day. And, I trust them to protect themselves and their employees by calling the Diggers Hotline when doing deep digs or where markings for utility pipes or lines are present.

Our agricultural community is committed to protecting our way of life and ensuring Nebraska continues to be a great place to live and raise a family. I share that commitment. In that, I trust them to use sound judgment when digging and to know whether or not to make the call.